

PROPONENT FOR HB 242

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Good morning, Mr. Chairman, members of this committee. For the record my name is Jonathan Barbagello. I live in Trinity School District which is just outside of Helena.

One of many reasons I support this bill is because of the clear message it sends that our children's education is important. So important in fact, that we would move the state primary back a month so that the Montana state primary and local school board elections could be held in conjunction.

With the aim in mind of saving our school districts money and encouraging involvement in our children's education by increasing voter turn out in our school elections, this bill accomplishes both of these goals very well.

School elections in Montana have possibly the lowest turn out of any election in the state. By holding school elections and the state's regular primaries together, the profile of our school elections will increase as will the number of voters participating in these important decisions.

Our children and the institutions that educate them have long been suffering from the neglect of voter participation in our system of government.

This bill not only would help reverse that but will encourage greater civic involvement in our elective process.

That process which has made America what it is, Great. The concept is simple. That we choose our government from among ourselves, to serve us, the people.

But the cornerstone of that concept is the individual responsibility to participation in the electoral processes. For, the day that Americans cease to cast a ballot will be the day the fate of our nation is sealed.

Members of this committee I urge you to support this bill, so that, in the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Thankyou.